

speed limit on an unremarkable two-mile strip of interstate highway. What do you do with motorists who come zooming through at, say, 32 mph?

You don't want to send the message that anyone can violate the speed laws with impunity; speed kills, and you have to believe that those who enacted the limits did so in the interest of public safety.

On the other hand, how many licenses would you snatch, and how many drivers would you send to jail for doing something that (it seemed to you) endangered the public not a whit?

Laws ought both to have some purpose and to advance that purpose. The purpose of the fund-raising laws is clear and commendable; to prevent the buying and selling of public office. But how does the law that has Al Gore in such trouble advance that purpose? It forbids solicitation or receipt of contributions in any federal "room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties." Did Gore solicit campaign contributions from his office phone? Sure he did. Clinton, too. Would the republic have been more secure if they had toddled off to the corner drugstore to make the calls? (Waiting until they got home after work would have been no solution; both live in buildings "occupied in the discharge of official duties.")

People who study these things say the prohibition, part of the civil service reform of a century ago, was designed to keep public officials from pressuring their staffs into making contributions. It did not contemplate telephoned solicitations made to private citizens.

But that's not all that bothers me about the investigations. Thompson's hearings are supposed to have some legislative purpose and, in truth, one keeps hearing about the need for campaign finance reform. But one could be forgiven for wondering if the true purpose isn't to bolster Republican Thompson's own presidential prospects and to destroy Democrat Gore's.

That is, perhaps, a small point. This isn't: The Supreme Court has said money is speech. If that makes sense (and it does to me), how can it make sense to put arbitrary limits on the amount of speech that's permissible?

That's not a trick question; it worries me a lot. It's inconceivable that there should be limits on the amount of time, doorbell-ringing, envelope-stuffing or other forms of political "speech" supporters can contribute to candidates of their choice. Why should we countenance limits on money speech?

The obvious answer is that we don't like the idea of rich people buying influence over public officials or otherwise subverting the government to their private purposes. (It's easy, though not necessarily fair, to assume that the purposes of the rich are more likely to be against the public interest than are the purposes of, say, organized labor.)

Maybe there's no way out of the dilemma. Either we allow free speech in all its forms, or we arbitrarily limit it for people we don't trust. The latest attempt to split the difference—allowing larger amounts of "speech" on behalf of political parties and smaller amounts for candidates—has pretty much come a cropper. Soft money/hard money indeed!

Public financing of campaigns is the most frequently offered solution. But how do you ensure fairness to lesser-known candidates, and how do you ensure the free speech rights of those who talk with their pocketbooks?

We have two things going on at the same time: a serious campaign-finance dilemma and a juicy campaign-finance scandal.

Guess which one will get the attention.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from

Washington is recognized for 10 minutes.

RETURNING MORE FREEDOM TO OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS

Mr. GORTON. Madam President, yesterday, President Clinton assailed my proposal to give more money to schools all across the country and restore authority for directing those funds to parents and teachers and school board members. The debate about the future of our public schools is vitally important to the future of this country. A front-page Washington Post article today notes: "...more parents than ever are choosing alternatives to public education for their children..." and are doing so in such great numbers that the phenomenon is starting to resemble a revolution. We should read this as a warning signal that parents are beginning to lose faith in their public schools. We must act decisively to restore that faith, improve education, and prepare our children for their future. More of what we are doing now is not enough.

On one point, the President and I do agree: We can improve public education. We part company, however, on who can best make decisions to improve our public schools. I believe that parents and teachers and local school board officials will make the greatest strides in improving education because they are in our homes and classrooms and high schools with our kids. But with his remarks yesterday, President Clinton says to parents and teachers: I don't trust you.

I find it remarkable that the President believes that restoring decision-making authority to parents and teachers and our elected school board members is somehow dangerous. The Gorton education reform amendment increases the amount of money school districts have to work with, thus, expanding the programs they can target to both disadvantaged and high-achieving students.

A recent study found that if Federal education funds for kindergarten through high school are sent directly to school districts, as the Gorton education reform amendment proposes, school districts would receive an additional \$670 million. Why would they receive more? Because the funds would bypass the Department of Education and State educational bureaucracies and save that amount in administrative application and compliance costs. Washington State school districts would receive \$12.5 million more to target to their most needy students; Arkansas schools would receive \$7 million in increased education funds; Mississippi would get \$9 million to target disadvantaged students and other school programs.

President Clinton and opponents of giving parents and teachers a larger role in our children's education presume that local school districts will act irresponsibly if Federal strings dis-

appear. This adds insult to injury. How can the President say with a straight face that programs would be "abolished" just because a bureaucrat does not direct them? Those who share the schools and classrooms with our children every day are not going to squander an opportunity to use an increase in Federal funds to address the problems they see every day.

It is also extremely disingenuous to state that my proposal would somehow "close the Department of Education," as President Clinton suggested yesterday. Higher education and dozens of functions relating to education in general will remain in the Department—perhaps too many such functions—but hundreds of bureaucrats who now write rules and regulations to inflict on every school in America will go, and their salaries will be used to hire new teachers and provide better education in every school in our Nation.

Just on Sunday, Madam President, the Columbus Dispatch, in an editorial, summarized the dispute in this fashion:

It's hard to see what the U.S. Department of Education has accomplished in its 20 years of existence to improve this country's system of schooling. The Senate's block grant approach is worth a try.

The will to change and improve our public school system and restore parents' faith in the quality of education it can provide to our kids is there. It is at home in our cities and towns and communities. Will we untie parents' and teachers' hands and let them do their jobs? The biggest point I believe today's Washington Post article makes clear is that parents are not turning to the Federal Government to improve their kids' education—parents and teachers are coming up with alternative solutions because they want the best possible education for their kids.

We must return and restore more freedom, not less, to our local schools, so that we can restore the public's faith in public education.

Mr. GLENN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FAIRCLOTH). The Senator from Ohio.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, I want to address the campaign finance matter that we have been involved with this year. I would like to start off by saying that I think sometimes we give the impression, with all of our horror stories about some of the things that have happened in campaign finance over the past few years, both on Capitol Hill and in the Presidential elections in both parties—that we sometimes emphasize to the point where we might add to the cynicism of the people of this country instead of helping placate or correct some of the reasons for that kind of cynicism.

I want to add that I think the majority of elected officials here in Washington, the majority of the people that run for office, whether high political office here in Washington, in the Congress, or even running for the Presidency or Vice Presidency, or the people